



HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

Belg rain prospects

A delay of *belg* rains continues in *belg*-growing areas of the country, particularly in eastern Amhara, southern Tigray as well as in parts of SNNP and Oromiya regions, notes WFP. Most farmers in these areas have completed land preparation while some have started planting in anticipation of the onset of rains. The recent Afar Region Food Security Update reports that despite one day shower in parts of the region during late January, woredas of Elidar, Kori, Bidu and Erebtu continue to face serious water shortages for human and livestock consumption as the *jilal* (long dry season) continues. Pasture availability in the region has deteriorated resulting in poor livestock physical condition and intra-woreda movement of livestock in search of graze. For more information: contact: wfp.addisababa@wfp.org, kmcdonald@unicef.org, info@dppc.gov.et & afardpsb@yahoo.com

Nutrition

Somali Region Nutrition Survey

Preparations to conduct the planned nutrition survey in Somali Region are progressing. Consultations under the leadership of the Ethiopian Health and Nutrition Research Institute (EHNRI) have continued. Meanwhile, on 18th March 2009, the EHNRI presented details of estimated resources required for the survey and requested humanitarian partners to extend pledges on personnel, logistical and financial supports. Resources pledged by partners will determine the number and timeline of surveys to be conducted.

Hotspot woreda updates

On 16th March, the Emergency Nutrition Coordination Unit/Early Warning and Response Directorate (ENCU/EWRD) presented the updated list of hotspot woredas in the country. The update indicates that the number of hotspot woredas under priority 1 in the country have decreased by 30 percent, from 216 in 2008 to 151 in March 2009. Updated list of hotspot woredas will be used by the nutrition cluster and other stakeholders in resource allocation and prioritization of humanitarian interventions. The list will continue to be updated at regular intervals to accommodate variations. For more information contact: orlao@dppc.gov.et

Food assistance

WFP presently faces a total shortfall of 371,693 mt of food resources amounting to US\$ 313 million. WFP inputs to the national Relief program (80 percent of the overall requirement) for 2009 stand at a shortfall of 282,093 mt valued at US\$ 235.5 million; WFP inputs to the Productive Safety Net Programme is short of 54,600 mt valued at US\$ 47.2 million; and Targeted Supplementary Food is short of 35,000 mt amounting to US\$ 30.3 million. Total WFP in-country stock at present amounts to 17,036 mt, including 7,400 mt in hubs in Somali Region. DMFSS in-country emergency food stock as at 20 March 2009 stands at 26,832 mt, including 20,554 mt non-allocated stock, whereas the free stock for Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) amounts to 64,696 mt. On the other hand, the Ethiopian Food Security Reserve Administration (EFSRA) stocks amount to 198,849 mt.

66 percent of 33,212 mt of food allocated for relief for February 2009 has been dispatched. Similarly, 20,143 mt of food has been dispatched to the seven zones of Somali Region (84 percent) through the Hubs and Spokes System. For more information contact: wfp.addisababa@wfp.org & mulunehw@dppc.gov.et

HEALTH UPDATE

Reports from the Federal Ministry of Health (FMoH) indicate 31 cases of Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD) from Oromiya and Somali regions during the past week, reports WHO. Out of the total reported, 29 cases are from Moyale woreda of Borena zone in Oromiya while two cases are from Moyale woreda of Liben zone, Somali Region. Since the beginning of 2009, a total of 125 cases of AWD have been reported nationally. For more information contact: who-wro@et.afro.who.int